Edlee Acres

Persistence pays off here

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again!

This simple bit of advice was Ed Anderson's motto when he decided to enter farming in 1972. "At times it seemed everything that could possibly go wrong, did," Ed recalled.

After moving to Appomattox County from Northern Virginia, Ed and his wife, Leeanne, bought approximately 700 acres of land and two beef herds of around 300 head.

"After about two years in the farming operation, the cattle market dropped to almost nothing so we decided to make some changes," the 57-year-old farmer said. "Over a period of time, we reduced the size of our farm to 215 acres and our herd to 50 cows."

Ed also had a problem with brucellosis (a profit-robbing disease that causes cattle to abort and have breeding problems). "We learned that prevention is better than treatment," he stated. "So we vaccinate all heifer calves for brucellosis each year as part of our herd health program." For the past three years, the herd has had certified-free status, signifying freedom from brucellosis.

Owning a farm was something Ed had always dreamed of. "He'd always wanted a farm. I knew that when I married him in 1948, but I was hoping he might forget about it," Leeanne laughs. "As you see, he didn't forget." On weekends the Andersons would leave their Fairfax home, where Ed was working in construction, and travel throughout Virginia in search of a farm.

Their search ended in Appomattox with the purchase of the farm they named "Edlee Acres." After his initial problems were solved, Ed switched his emphasis from quantity to quality, buying a few purebred Angus cattle for the foundation of what he hoped would someday be a top-notch herd.

"We really only had two options with beef cattle," he stated. "Either go the purebred route and sell bulls and heifers or go into crossbred cattle and sell at the feeder calf sales. Because of our reduced farm size, we chose the purebreds."

Today, the herd features 50 outstanding cows, some weighing 1,200 pounds (approximately 200 pounds over the Angus average). Still Ed is not satisfied saying, "One of my goals is to have 50 cows that weigh 1,400 pounds and 600 pound bulls at weaning."

To help obtain that goal, Ed attended a three-day artificial insemination school and now synchronizes and breeds all of his cows by this method. "We feel we can improve our herd faster through A.I. using superior bulls," he explained. "We try to select bulls that will add growth, maternal value and calving ease."

He uses semen from top bulls such as "Franco," "Shearbrook Shosho n e," "Pacesetter," "Band 234" and "Briarhill J. J." This spring, he had a 90 percent success rate with the technique.

Ed produces most of the livestock feed, raising 10-20 acres of corn for silage or ear corn. Pastures have been seeded in orchardgrass-clover or fescue-clover for grazing and hay. Annual soil tests determine liming and fertilization needs.

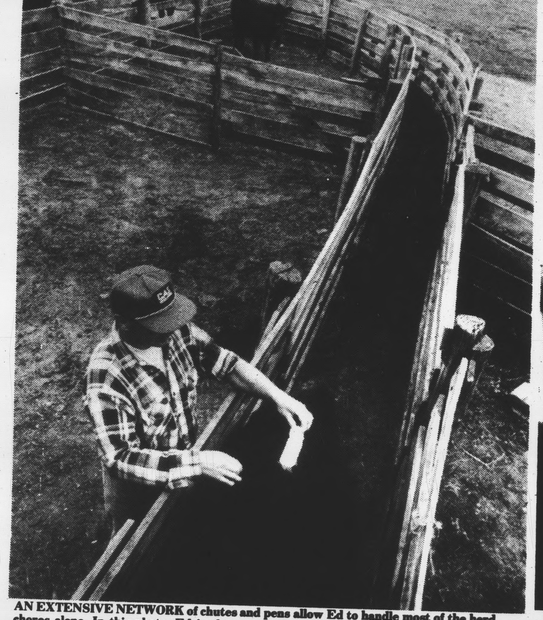
Three separate feeding programs are followed for the cow herd, first-calf heifers and steers, and bulls being readied for sale. The registered bulls and heifers are sold by private contract and local advertising in an eight-county area. Ed hopes to enter some bulls in the performance test station in the future.

Outstanding herd health is the result of a meticulous program that includes weighing, tagging, several preventive shots, worming, and treatment of grubs and lice. "We follow the Extension veterinarian's guidelines on herd health and also get help from our local veterianarian," Ed stated. "It has really paid off."

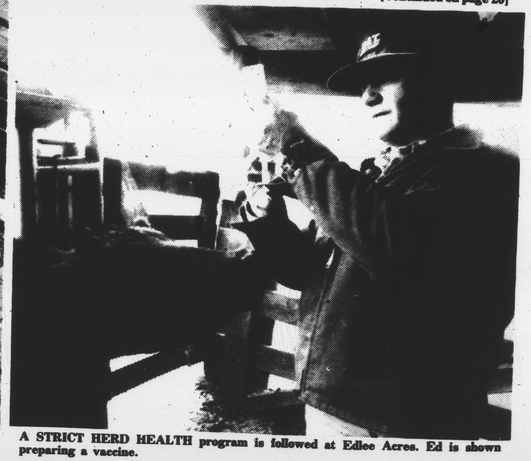
With no hired help, Ed depends upon 24-year-old son, Andy, and Leeanne to help when needed. The remaining three Anderson children (Ronald, Dorene and Jeanne) have moved from the farm, but visit frequently. "A volleyball net is a permanent fixture in our backyard once the weather warms up," Leeanne said. "It's a favorite family

[Continued on page 20]

LEEANN AND ED Anderson with their German Shepherd, Hilda.



AN EXTENSIVE NETWORK of chutes and pens allow Ed to handle most of the herd chores alone. In this photo, Ed is shown applying a heat mount detector to a cow.



A STRICT HERD HEALTH program is followed at Edlee Acres. Ed is shown preparing a vaccine.

CENTRAL FIDELITY. WE GREW UP ON THE FARM.

Central Fidelity has come a long way. We're now one of the largest banks in Virginia, and still growing. And when you look at all the modern banking techniques we use, like high-speed computers, you might find it hard to believe we had our beginnings in Virginia's rural markets.

But we did. And we haven't forgotten. In fact, a large part of our activity is still in agri-business. In both loans and deposits. And our agricultural specialists are working every day to keep the farm business we have, and get the farm business we may be missing.

So we may have grown up — but we haven't left home.

Member FDIC

Central Fidelity Bank